



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK

Office of the Fire Marshal

Donn V. Dobson Fire Marshal

302 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475-1741

Telephone (860) 395-3133 • FAX (860) 395-1216

Email: ddobson@town.old-saybrook.ct.us

Hello my name is Donn Dobson & I am the Fire Marshal for the Town of Old Saybrook.

I am here to speak in favor of **RAISED BILL 6616 AN ACT ESTABLISHING WOOD SMOKE TO BE A PUBLIC NUISANCE.**

I am here to day to speak in favor of this bill for several reasons. My duties as Fire Marshal/Open Burning Official require me to handle incidents involving smoke and the problems that smoke can create. Our scope is somewhat limited as to what we can do to mitigate the effects of smoke in a given situation.

As defined in the NFPA 921 2008 Edition Smoke ***"The airborne solid and liquid particulates and gases evolved when a material undergoes pyrolysis or combustion, together with the quantity of air that is entrained or otherwise mixed into the mass"***.

From over 20 years of fire service experience I can attest to the ill effects of wood burning smoke. As a Fire Marshal I utilize the fire code to make sure people stay safe from the effects of smoke & fire inside of a building. We need to do the same with smoke on the outside of a building. The byproducts (chemicals, carcinogens) are the same, the effects are the same. Humans are not meant to inhale smoke in any form. Inhaling smoke is only one part of the problem. On several occasions I have been called to incidents involving illegal burning of construction materials, brush, cars, sofas, pallets, rugs just to name of few. On more than one occasion smoke from illegal brush/"camp" fires have come close to closing portions of I-95 and have come close to causing several accidents during summer rush hour. In some of these situations the smoke created serious hazard visibility, breathing as well to homes.

The burning of wood and the nuisance it creates is not limited to illegal activity. I would like to also speak to the smoke that is emitted from Outdoor Wood Boilers. Since these types of outside wood boilers have become more popular as an alternative to heating, Municipalities in Connecticut have been limited as to the enforcement of smoke migration with these types of outside wood boilers. In some instances these types of boilers have been installed with a building permit and not to manufactures specifications. Part of the problem stems from a lack of uniform definition for smoke as to what is considered a nuisance and what is not a nuisance. The other part of the problem is due to the height of the chimneys on these types of boilers, they often times are burning continuously at all hours of the day and at a lower height than the average height of a chimney on a house. This creates at times, the banking of smoke into low lying areas as well as into nearby homes.

The smoke often times does not dissipate in the same fashion it does on a chimney on a house. This coupled with the fact that people are installing these types of wood boilers in very densely populated areas; this has created situations where whole neighborhoods are subjected to smoke from these wood boilers. The smoke as already stated creates health & safety hazards but also can affect the quality of life to those effected smoke in any form.